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QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 14 May 1998 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Today the Palestinian people solemnly commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of al-nakba (the catastrophe), the dispossession of our people and the uprooting of over 750,000 Palestinians from their land and homes. To mark this day, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, a million person march was organized throughout all the Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps.

As if the bitterness and pain of the occasion were not enough, the occupying Israeli army opened fire indiscriminately against participants in the march, killing eight people, two of whom were eight-year-old children, and injuring approximately 400 others. Several of those injured remain in critical condition. The eight killings were committed in several places in the Gaza Strip, in particular near the illegal settlement of "Gush Katif". The injuries were widespread throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. Furthermore, another crime was committed against the holy places in Jerusalem. Last night a bunch of Israeli fanatics burned Bab Al-Ghawanima, one of the gates of Al-Haram Al-Sharif. This is yet another in the long history of acts of desecration by Israeli fanatics, which were not prevented by the occupying Israeli authorities.

These crimes, which are typical of the occupying Power and which are now added to the long criminal record of Israeli actions and oppressive measures against the Palestinian people, must be condemned by the international community in the strongest terms. The world must stop the Israeli Government of Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu before it plunges the region into an even more dire and unstable situation. The Security Council, as the body responsible for the

maintenance of international peace and security, should take action in this regard.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 36, 37 and 87, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nasser AL-KIDWA
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations